

# School Improvement Grants

## School Level Section

### Tiers I, II, and III

Name of School: Shannon County Alternative					Grades Served: K-8		
TIER I	TIER II	INTERVENTION				Tier III	Intervention
		turnaround	restart	closure	transformation		
X					X		

## DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION

(1) (Tier I, II, & III) The LEA has analyzed the needs of the school and selected an intervention for the school.

- List the members and positions of the committee that conducted the needs assessment and determined the outcome. *Your answer must include the following: A list of the names of the members of the committee and the position within the district that each person is representing. The committee must include a broad range of stakeholders including administrators, teachers, program directors, community members, and parents.*

The Corrective Action Leadership Team for Shannon County School District met on April 6, 2010 to conduct the needs assessment and determine the intervention for each school. Members of the team who were present include Dan Elwood, superintendent; Vickie Grant, school improvement director; Maurice Twiss, federal programs director/community member; Robert Two Crow, Lakota studies director/community member; Darrell Eagle Bull, Dean of Students/community member, Alternative School; Monica Whirlwind Horse, principal/community member, Rockyford Upper; Connie Rous, teacher, Batesland Elementary; Illa Brings Him Back, paraprofessional/ community member, Wolf Creek School; Liz Swallow, paraprofessional/community member, Red Shirt School; Natalie Hand, parent, Wolf Creek School; Mark Donovan, grandparent, Wolf Creek School; Bob Rose, technical adviser; and Sandra Gaspar, consultant.

The Alternative School staff, parents, community, and students were avid supporters of the 2009-2010 proposal and have continued assessing needs in hopes of an opportunity to apply in 2010-2011. When the Director of Student Support, was advised on March 18, 2011 of the possibility of applying, he met with all stakeholders and the decision was made ask the district to apply. Mr. Eagle Bull and Vickie Grant, Director of School Improvement participated in the 1003(g) Application Webinar on March 24, 2011 and the Senior Leadership Team consisting of Richard Zephier, superintendent/community member; Coy Sasse, business manager/community member; Maurice Twiss, federal programs director/community member; Vickie Grant, school improvement director, Robert Two Crow, Lakota studies director/community member; Beverly Bertram, SCEA President, Dana Christensen, technology director; Dennis Brewer, transportation director/community member; Terry Albers, human resources director/community member and principals, Monica Whirlwind Horse, Robert Hall, Larry Larson, Steve Selchert, Melvin Sierra, Barbara Ice, and Connie Kaltenbach discussed and endorsed moving forward with the Alternative School application on 3/28/2011.

Addendum #1 is a letter from Darrell Eagle Bull and list of staff, students and parents describing the school's continuous efforts to assess needs and plan towards becoming a Transformation School.

➤ Indicate the data sources that were analyzed as part of the school's comprehensive needs assessment designed for the purpose of the SIG application. *Your answer must address data within the four lenses of the Data Retreat<sup>SM</sup> process: Student, Professional Practices, Programs & Structures, and Family & Community Data. Include an evaluation of current practices and programs as required in the third lens of data review. If any of the schools involved have had a school level audit based on the District Audit Tool published by CCSO, the results must be included in the data analysis.*

Student: DSTEP data in reading and mathematics (2003 to 2010)

Local CBM data in reading and mathematics (2003 to 2011)

District Audit, 2006 and 2009

Teacher: Current year in-service schedules

Anecdotal and formal teacher feedback regarding professional development

District Audit, 2006 and 2009

Program: Mathematics Program Audit conducted by TIE, 2011

Literacy Program Audit conducted by CORE, 2011

District Audit, 2006 and 2009

Community and parent:

Parent Survey, academics component, 2010 & 2011

District Audit, 2006 and 2009

➤ Describe the process used to complete the school's comprehensive needs assessment (CNA) conducted for the purpose of the SIG application. *Your answer must include the following: **WHEN** the comprehensive needs assessment was conducted, give date (must be completed between February and application submission); **WHO** was involved with the analysis of the data; and **HOW** the comprehensive needs assessment was accomplished.*

A comprehensive needs assessment was conducted by the District Corrective Action Leadership Team in the Board Room in Batesland on April 6, 2010. Ten of the 12 regular members of the Corrective Action Leadership Team participated in the data analysis. In addition one parent, one grandparent, and the Dean of Students at the Alternative School (a Persistently Lowest Achieving School) joined the group for the data review/analysis and subsequent discussion. In keeping with the academic goal of the Shannon County School District Improvement Plan, the primary focus of the data analysis was student performance in reading and mathematics, both on the DSTEP (from 2003 through 2009) and on district-administered Curriculum Based Measures (CBMs) in reading and mathematics (2003 through 2010). The School Improvement coordinator presented student achievement, teacher, program and community/parent data via a slide show presentation and hand-outs. Members of the group discussed patterns/trends and generated a list of planning considerations. In addition, the CATeam reviewed a draft professional development plan (that was based on an earlier analysis of data) and discussed ways in which the district SIG proposal and the professional development plan could be merged. Meeting participants worked in triads to note strengths and weaknesses in the data and in the professional development plan. They provided oral and written feedback to the grant planning committee.

A comprehensive needs assessment was conducted during a Strategic Planning Session at the Radisson Hotel in Rapid City on March 18-19, 2011. All members of the Senior Leadership Team along with school board members, Todd O'Bryan, Tom Conroy, Bryan Brewer, and Angie Eagle Bull participated. The School Improvement Director presented student achievement, teacher, program and community/parent data via a slide show presentation and hand-outs. Members of the group discussed patterns/trends and generated a list of planning considerations. Since the SIG announcement had just been released, principals and Mr. Eagle Bull (representing the Alternative School) were able to utilize this forum to inform the SIG proposal. Meeting participants worked in triads to note strengths and weaknesses in the data and within the school system. The draft Strategic Plan was distributed in mid-April and in part informs this proposal.

- Broadly describe the results of that review. *Summarize the results of the CNA for this school.*

The team that conducted the Comprehensive Needs Assessment recognized that the mathematics achievement of Shannon County students overall remains lower than achievement in literacy/reading. Although 38% of district's students are proficient in reading, only 33% are proficient in mathematics. Data disaggregated by building showed a similar pattern: mathematics achievement in ALL Shannon County Schools remains lower than achievement in reading. Team members were especially interested in a chart that compared reading and mathematics DSTEP performance in each school according to the number of test items answered correctly, on average. Students in the various schools needed to answer from .9 (Batesland) to 8.3 (Shannon County Alternative School) more questions correctly on the reading test to achieve proficiency. In mathematics, these numbers ranged from 5.7 to 15.1 more questions correctly to achieve proficiency. Results for Shannon County Alternative School are the lowest among all schools in the district. No Alternative School students are proficient in mathematics; only 16% are proficient in reading. These results are not surprising, since the primary focus of professional development, improvement in instruction, coaching and assessment has been on literacy since 2002. Only within the past four years has the district selected and begun to implement a reformed mathematics program (Investigations) in grades K-5. The district audit revealed that professional development has been inadequate; as a result, implementation of the new mathematics program with fidelity has been compromised. The team agreed, via consensus, that improving mathematics achievement should be the focus during the SIG period, but that efforts to continue support for literacy should not be diminished.

Since Shannon County Alternative School is a Tier I school, the team also considered additional data for this school separately. Of particular concern were data that showed the following: of the 54 students who enrolled in the Alternative School, only 21 students have been in the program for what is considered a full academic year (FAY). This attrition rate of over 60% has serious implications when it comes to delivering a coherent and properly sequenced instructional program. Given the alternatives, the team agreed that the Transformation Model was most appropriate for the Shannon County Alternative School.

- List the strengths and weaknesses for this school based on the results of the comprehensive needs assessment. *These should be brief statements or phrases. Prioritize the areas that will be addressed with SIG funds.*

#### Shannon County Alternative School

Strengths: Staff/student relationships are strong; many staff members are also community members with a deep understanding of local culture

The Student/staff ratio is low—about 5 to 1  
In 2009, the school made AYP in reading

As indicated in a comprehensive parent survey, parents of Alternative School students support the SCSD academic program  
The Alternative School has an active Building Leadership Team that regularly addresses issues of teaching and learning.  
Recruitment/retention incentives and incentives to increase student performance are already in place.

**Weaknesses (Needs):**

Mathematics achievement is very low (no students are proficient)  
Historically, professional development has been inadequate  
Since the district currently has only one reading coach and one math coach, instructional coaching specific to the Alternative School has been virtually non-existent  
There is a great deal of student transience: only 21 of the school's 54 students have been in the program since the beginning of the school year.

**Priority areas:**

Improve achievement in mathematics  
Improve instruction through a comprehensive professional development program in mathematics and assignment of a full-time instructional coach at the Alternative School  
Address issues of student mobility through curriculum enhancements which include technology-based modules.

- Provide the rationale used to commit to serve this school with SIG funds. *Why is this school served?*

Since the Shannon County Alternative School is a Tier I school, the district is committed to serving this school as its top priority. Students served in the alternative program are all high-risk students who struggle the most to be successful in school; they are consistently the lowest-achieving students in the district. Most alternative students have problems dealing with school authority. They display low self-esteem, misconduct in the classrooms and are generally disciplined more than their classmates. A number of Alternative School students are pregnant and parenting teens. The Pine Ridge Reservation is a high poverty area with unemployment hovering around 80%. All of these conditions put Shannon County Alternative students at highest risk for dropping out of school, alcohol/drug abuse, and suicide. These are the students who need the most instructional, emotional and social support.

- (2) (Tier I & II) The LEA has the capacity to use school improvement funds to provide adequate resources and related support to each Tier I and Tier II school identified in the LEA's application in order to implement, fully and effectively, the required activities of the school intervention model it has selected. *Describe the district's capacity to implement the selected intervention model. Indicate resources available to the district such as human capital, funding sources, partnerships, etc. that ensure the district's capacity to implement the chosen model for this school. Differentiate what has already taken place and detailed plans for the future.*

The district has the personnel, the technical infrastructure, and a history of participation in the South Dakota Incentives+ project to jumpstart its efforts to implement the Transformation Model in the Shannon County Alternative School. As a result of its participation in SDI+, the district has already linked growth in student performance with monetary incentives for paraprofessionals, teachers and principals. In addition, SDI+ has assisted the district in implementing strategies to recruit, place and retain highly-qualified and highly-effective staff.

If this proposal is funded, the district will contract with Technology and Innovation in Education (TIE) to assist with implementation of the Transformation Model in Shannon County Alternative School. TIE is a high-capacity, intermediate service agency that specializes in teacher and school leader development, school innovation, program evaluation, and data-driven school improvement. In particular, TIE will assist the district in creating a sophisticated evaluation system that includes a process for removing staff who are not effective.

Shannon County School District has a progressive superintendent and a Board of Education who are willing to abandon the status quo in favor of new ideas that show promise for improving teaching and learning. They are committed to significantly increasing both student instructional time and staff professional development time. The district has one of the lowest teacher/student ratios in the state of South Dakota and will employ a total of 8 instructional coaches (literacy, mathematics, inclusion, SuccessMaker, and Response to Intervention--RTI). As a part of the SDI+ project, each school has created a Building Leadership Team that has received more than 50 hours of specialized training in data-driven decision making, effective instructional strategies, effective teaming, and school leadership. The district has also changed its schedule so that all staff have one hour of collaborative professional development time each morning. Teachers discuss curriculum, instruction and assessment via districtwide DDN sessions. In addition, the district has created a sophisticated, web-based system to guide instruction and assessment. The system aligns the district's literacy and mathematics programs with state standards and provides teachers with pacing guides to ensure that students will have a guaranteed and viable curriculum. The district also has a comprehensive formative and summative assessment system, and teachers have immediate access to a wealth of student achievement data to help guide their instruction.

The district has already made significant improvements in curriculum (comprehensive literacy and reformed mathematics), instruction and assessment. The district has adopted a philosophy of continuous improvement, however. Beginning with the 2010-2011 school year, the district implemented a comprehensive, 4-year professional development program in mathematics and literacy for paraprofessionals, teachers and principals. It contracted with TIE, Black Hills State University, and the Consortium on Reading Excellence (CORE) to provide this professional development, which included two weeks of training in mathematics and one week of training in literacy prior to the start of school in August of 2010, in addition to regularly planned in-service days. In year two, 2011-2012, there will be one week of mathematics training as well as job-embedded support from TIE and CORE throughout the 2011-2012 school year.

All district efforts are aimed at developing and increasing teacher and school leader effectiveness. Shannon County Alternative School will also significantly increase learning and professional development time and will strengthen its already-strong ties to supports within the community.

- (3) (Tier I & II - mandatory; Tier III - optional) The LEA must describe actions it has taken, or will take, to recruit, screen, and select external providers, if applicable, to ensure their quality. *Indicate the process used up to this point for selection of external providers. Provide a detailed plan for this process in the future. Who will be involved in the selection procedure? What criteria have been set?*

Contingent on funding, the district will contract with TIE to provide both technical assistance on implementation of the School Improvement Grant and for additional professional development in mathematics over the three-year grant period. In addition, the district will contract with the Center for the Advancement of Mathematics and Science Education (CAMSE) at Black Hill State University to provide the content portion of the mathematics professional development and with CORE for Response to Intervention (RtI) support.

These external service providers were selected because of their long and successful track record in South Dakota and their specialized expertise. TIE has been South Dakota's primary professional development provider for the past 25 years; CAMSE is one of the Centers of Excellence established within South Dakota's university system. This powerful combination of pedagogy and content expertise will help SCSD create a comprehensive, job-embedded professional development program that will be implemented over the three-year duration of this grant and will provide a minimum of 270 hours of professional development (90 hours each year for three years) in number, algebra and geometry. CORE who will provide RtI support is an approved Turnaround and Transformation provider in many states in partnership with Global Partnership School.

Shannon County's District Leadership Team and Administrative Team were involved in the selection of the external partners.

- (4) (Tier I & II - mandatory; Tier III - optional) The LEA must describe actions it has taken, or will take, to design and implement interventions consistent with the final requirements. Check the intervention model and answer the questions pertaining to the intervention model chosen for this Tier I or II school. If this is a Tier III school, complete if using one of the four intervention models or skip to question #7.

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## **X The Transformation Model**

### ***Section I.A.2(d)***

#### **Developing and increasing teacher and school leader effectiveness.** [Section I.A.2(d)(1)]

a. Describe the process the district will use to replace the principal. [Section I.A.2(d)(1)(i)(A)]

- *When will the contract with the current principal end?*

June 30, 2011

- *What criteria will be used in selecting a new principal?*

An interview protocol based on the work of Marzano, Waters and McNulty (School Leadership That Works) will be developed jointly by district leaders and TIE technical assistance providers. Marzano, et al define 21 research-based leadership responsibilities that are required for effective school leadership. Prospective candidates for the Shannon

County Alternative principalship should be well-grounded in these leadership responsibilities. In particular, they should be strong instructional leaders.

- *What is the process that will be used to select the new principal?*

The position will be advertised statewide. The district's Human Resources Facilitator will screen the applications to assure that all are complete and that all candidates are appropriately certified. A list of qualified applicants will be presented to the superintendent.

- *Who will be involved in the decision making?*

The superintendent and the Alternative School's Building Leadership Team will conduct the interviews and make a hiring recommendation to the Board of Education.

- *When will the process take place? If the principal has been replaced recently, describe the circumstances and process.*

As soon as funding is approved for this proposal, the position will be advertised.

b. Describe how the school will use rigorous, transparent, and equitable evaluation systems for teachers and principals. [Section I.A.2(d)(1)(i)(B)]

- *How will data on student growth be a significant factor in the evaluation system?*

With technical assistance from TIE, Shannon County School District will revise its teaching and principal evaluation system. Currently, student growth at the building level determines whether or not paraprofessionals, teachers and principals within that building receive monetary rewards through the South Dakota Incentives+ program. Thus far, student performance for the whole building determines the incentive payment; however, SDI+ is currently piloting a system in two other districts wherein the performance of students assigned to individual teachers will determine rewards. This system will be applied to at Shannon County this year. Student growth at the classroom and building level will be factored into the new evaluation system for teachers and principals, respectively.

- *What other factors will be used (multiple observation-based assessments of performance and ongoing collections of professional practice reflective of student achievement and increased high school graduations rates)?*

Other activities to be factored into the new evaluation system for teachers and principals will include:

- Participation in Building Leadership Team/Collaborative Work Group activities
- Participation in a Leadership Academy for Principals and in National Board Certification activities for teacher
- Full and active participation in district-sponsored professional development programs
- For teachers, multiple observation-based assessments of performance by principals and external service providers
- For principals, an analysis of the frequency and quality of observation-based assessment of teacher performance.



- *How will the school define student growth in accordance with definitions related to this notice (the change in achievement for an individual student between two or more points in time)? For grades 3-8 and 11, student growth data must be based on student scores on the Dakota STEP.*

The district intends to use the definition of growth used by the SDI+ project: Growth is defined as any increase in a Dakota STEP scaled score that exceeds the expected growth in a scaled score over a one-year period. Example: a third grade student's score increases a full grade level **plus** when tested in the fourth grade.

- *Are the evaluation systems designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement?*

The district's Leadership Team is charged with reviewing and recommending policy changes to the Shannon County Board of Education. As indicated earlier, this team includes the superintendent, central office staff, principals, teachers, paraprofessionals, a board member and, as appropriate, parents/community members. The team meets monthly and will be assigned to develop, review and revise the evaluation/compensation system according to the requirements of this program. TIE will provide technical assistance throughout this process. Additionally, the Shannon County Certified Teacher Negotiated Agreement requires that any revisions to the evaluation system include representation from a team made up of teachers, principals/administration.

- *How will the district identify and reward school leaders, teachers, and other staff who, in implementing this model, have increased student achievement and high school graduation rates?*

By virtue of its participation in the South Dakota Incentives+ project, the district already contributes to a comprehensive statewide data base that tracks event participation and student achievement relative to all paraprofessionals, teachers and principals in the Shannon County School District.

- *How will the district identify and remove those who, after ample opportunities have been provided for them to improve their professional practice, have not done so?*

Removal processes and procedures will be included as a part of the new teacher and principal evaluation system to be developed by the District Leadership and Evaluation Teams with technical assistance from TIE.

- *How will the district provide staff ongoing, high-quality, job-embedded professional development (subject-specific pedagogy, instruction that reflects a deeper understanding of the community served by the school, or differentiated instruction)?*

A major component of this plan is the implementation of a comprehensive, job-embedded professional development program to improve teaching and learning in mathematics and to integrate Lakota studies into the teaching of mathematics across the district. This detailed plan is aligned with the district's improvement plan. It includes

- an additional one-two weeks of professional development in mathematics content and pedagogy for all teachers in principals each August before school starts;



- ongoing training in Cognitively Guided Instruction (a program designed at the University of Wisconsin specifically for Native American children) throughout the project period;
- follow-up classroom observations by professional development providers throughout the project period;
- additional instructional coaching support in all Shannon County Schools throughout the project period and beyond;
- continued training of Building Leadership Teams and Collaborative Work groups throughout the project period and beyond to increase focus on data-driven student achievement and integration of Lakota studies into the regular academic program
- an instructional leadership class (Lenses on Learning) for all building principals, and district instructional coaches in RTI, literacy, mathematics and Lakota studies in Year 1. In this class, participants learn how to support improved instruction in mathematics. Additional instructional leadership programs will be designed for Years 2 and 3.

Year 1: Focus on Number Sense with Lakota integration

Year 2: Focus on Algebra with Lakota integration

Year 3: Focus on Geometry with Lakota integration

TOTAL: 90 hours per year

The pedagogy components of the program will be delivered by TIE. The content components of the program will be delivered by the CAMSE at Black Hills State University.

- *How will the school ensure that the professional development is aligned with the school's comprehensive instructional program?*

The entire professional development program in mathematics was designed to support the district's inquiry-based mathematics programs: Investigations in grades K-5 and Connected Math in grades 6-8.

- *How will the school ensure that the professional development is designed with school staff to ensure they are equipped to facilitate effective teaching and learning and have the capacity to successfully implement school reform strategies?*

The comprehensive professional development program was an outgrowth of the district improvement plan that was developed and is currently being monitored by the District Leadership Team. That team includes the superintendent, central office, staff, principals, teachers, paraprofessionals, a board member, and parents/community members as appropriate.

- *What strategies are designed to recruit, place, and retain staff with the skills necessary to meet the needs of the students in the turnaround school? [Section I.A.2(a)(ii)] (Examples include: financial incentives, increased opportunities for promotion and career growth, and more flexible work conditions).*

Through the SDI+ project, significant incentives are provided to paraprofessionals, teachers and principals for professional development participation, individual leadership and/or teacher growth, and student achievement. Additionally, through SDI+ in combination with Title II, Part A classroom based incentives are provided. A teacher could earn nearly \$10,000 in incentive pay if all criteria are met.

- c. Describe any optional activity the school chooses to implement to develop teacher and school leader effectiveness.

In addition to the comprehensive professional program that is required of all staff before school starts and during each school year, the district designs a menu of seminars, workshops and college classes each school year. These optional professional growth activities are designed to strengthen knowledge and skills of individuals in specific areas. For example, a teacher may elect to take a refresher course in South Dakota READS, a college class in Lakota language, or a series of Saturday morning workshops on how to prepare FOSS science kits.

#### **Comprehensive instructional reform strategies**

- d. Describe how an instructional program will be determined and designed.
- *What data will be used to identify the instructional program to be used? How will it be used?*

##### **LEA Information:**

- Local and state assessment data (Curriculum Based Measurement, Success Maker Scores, and DSTEP scores)
  - The student population is small, thus permitting analysis of student growth on an individual and by subject basis. Student skill and growth status will be analyzed at both the sending and alternative school levels to determine if the current instructional program is yielding increased student achievement. NOTE: The district has a comprehensive web-based assessment, curriculum, and evaluation system (called Shannontech) which allows in-depth analysis of all assessments at individual, classroom, grade, school, and district levels. This information will inform decisions regarding skills the instructional program will need to accommodate.
  - Additionally, correlations between performance on programmatic assessments (e.g., Success Maker) compared to DSTEP scores will be conducted to determine if students who do well programmatically are also likely to do well on the DSTEP.
- Demographic data (enrollment information—students per grade level, mobility, etc.); staff observation and evaluation information); attendance data (staff and students).
  - While the school structure is K-8, most students are in the 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grades; mobility is high at the school (e.g., 54 students have been enrolled at some time this year and of these only 21 have been enrolled since the beginning of the year); and attendance, while improved, is impacted as some students arrive late and leave early, making flexibility in scheduling a priority for the instructional program.

##### **Instructional Program Information:**

- For both current and prospective instructional programs, quantitative and qualitative programmatic data on student achievement and engagement will be analyzed.
- Current and prospective programs will be analyzed with respect to flexibility in scheduling and delivery with an emphasis on “if a student misses a day or portion of a day, how does the instructional program adapt.”
- Interview data from individuals with expertise or knowledge of the instructional programs (not connected to the program as well as program representatives) will lend insight into ways to structure the overall instructional program to best meet student needs.

■ *How will the school ensure that the instructional program is research-based?*

Current Program:

- The research base for the district's current comprehensive literacy program (Rigby Literacy by Design, Rigby Literacy, EMC, Spelling Connections, Success Maker, Phonics by Fountas and Pinnell) and mathematics program (Mathematics Investigations K-5 and Connected Mathematics 6-8, Everyday Counts, Calendar Math, Practice Counts, Do the Math, Success Maker) is well documented and supported by Scientifically Based Research for each component. Additionally, the district utilizes external evaluations of program implementation, and provides training for principals to observe and evaluate program implementation in the classrooms.

Prospective Supplemental Program:

- Research-based documentation is and will continue to be acquired for the prospective program (Synergistic Modules Lab). In addition to the quantitative research-base for increased student achievement district will review qualitative and quantitative research with respect to:
  - Student engagement and motivation
  - Student attendance and impact on student mobility
  - Impact for students with learning and behavioral challenges
  - How it supports student independence, responsibility, and study skill development
  - How it helps students that learn in different ways
  - Teacher as facilitator of learning
  - Integration of disciplines
  - Self-confidence
  - Cooperative Learning

■ *How will vertical alignment from one grade to the next be determined and ensured?*

Current Program:

- Current core literacy, mathematics, and science programs are supported by district-wide pacing guides and lesson plans (i.e., curriculum maps/guides) for every grade level, thus ensuring vertical alignment. These guides are housed in Shannontech (described previously). Curriculum committees and summer work groups develop the pacing guides and lesson plans and populate the lesson plans with the appropriate content information for each grade level. SuccessMaker assesses each student to determine the right starting level and self-paced lessons reduce the frustrations of instruction that is too fast or slow. Principals and district-level instructional support team members monitor lesson plans and classrooms for fidelity to the core programs.

Prospective Supplemental Program:

- Since Synergistic Modules are carefully analyzed and correlated to state and national standards, the district will partner with the developers to determine which modules are most appropriate for a given grade level. The SYNERGY Management System (fully integrated, browser-based content management system) will further enable the district to monitor and adapt vertical alignment of this program.

▪ *How will the school ensure alignment with State academic standards?*

Current Program:

- District curriculum committees and summer work groups align lessons for core resources within pacing guides to the State academic standards on an on-going basis. Shannontech actually allows standards to be “attached” to the lesson plan as well as being able to view all lessons that meet any given standard. For existing standards, the depth of coverage in lessons is evaluated yearly (based on standard or indicator level results on the DSTEP) and adjusted as appropriate; for newly released standards a comprehensive alignment process takes place. For SuccessMaker, the district has conducted a correlational study between SuccessMaker scores and student performance on the DSTEP—finding a .81 correlation coefficient, which is significantly stronger than the .50 correlation commonly touted between aptitude test score and grades.
- For the Synergistic Modules, the district’s summer work group will evaluate the alignment as provided by the developer. After implementation, the district will be able to determine the correlation between student performance on the modules as compared to their performance on the DSTEP.

e. Describe the process the school will use to promote the continuous use of student data.

▪ *Indicate the use of student data such as from formative, interim, and summative assessments.*

Assessments which are formative, interim, and summative in nature:

- A district-wide assessment team conducts fall, winter, and spring screening/benchmarking assessments in the areas of Early Literacy & Reading Fluency (DIBELS—national benchmarks), Mathematics Fluency and Vocabulary (local and national norm referenced scores) for grades K-8. Additionally, classroom teachers (PK-3) administer a comprehensive Early Literacy assessment (PALS—Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening) and teachers in grades 4-8 administer a fluency/comprehension assessment (DRA—Developmental Reading Assessment) during fall, winter, and spring assessment windows.
- For students who aren’t at benchmark/proficient, DIBELS cutpoints are used to determine who needs additional or differentiated instruction—Intensive/Below Basic progress monitoring occurs weekly and Strategic/Basic progress monitoring occurs 2 times a monthly.
- SuccessMaker scores (Grade Equivalents & Percent Correct) are used on a regular basis to identify skill deficiencies and ensuing intervention strategies.

Assessments which are summative in nature (although can be used to evaluate, adapt, and adjust instruction for ensuing years):

- DSTEP scores are analyzed at individual, classroom, grade-level, school, and district levels to make programmatic, individual student, and teacher placement decisions. The previously mentioned assessments (such as DIBELS) are used in a similar manner.

▪ *How will student data be used to inform and differentiate instruction in order to meet the academic needs of individual students?*

Formative assessments (such as unit pre-tests and end of unit assessments) are embedded within most lessons. In addition to an individual teacher using this information to adjust

instruction for individual students or small groups of students, grade-level teachers from across the district meet regularly via Digital Dakota Network (DDN) to share student work and assessment information which is used to inform and differentiate instruction in order to meet the academic needs of individual students and improve Shannon County's overall academic program.

- For students who aren't at benchmark/proficient, DIBELS cutpoints are used to determine who needs additional or differentiated instruction—Intensive/Below Basic progress monitoring occurs weekly and Strategic/Basic progress monitoring occurs 2 times a monthly.
  - The district has implemented a Response to Intervention/Instruction (RtI) program for reading and will develop benchmark and progress monitoring assessments (led by South Dakota mathematics specialists) for mathematics this summer.
  - In order to effectively use this data to inform and differentiate instruction, the summer work groups have as a top priority to unpack standards and identify key concepts which are essential to student success. Concurrent with this process will be the identification of intervention resources and strategies (referred to as RtI Literacy and Math Toolkits) to be utilized during RtI classroom (Tier I), small group (Tier II), and individual (Tier III) intervention sessions.

- f. Describe any optional instructional reform strategy the school chooses to implement.
- The district has implemented a Professional Learning Community model to address issues of teaching and learning. Each building has a Building Leadership Team that is responsible to organizing Collaborative Work Groups within each building. These groups meet several times each month to review student achievement data, discuss instructional strategies, examine student work, and discuss ways in which they can collaborate to improve student achievement. This research-based model is currently in its fourth year of operation in the district. Building Leadership Team receives training and technical support through the South Dakota Incentives+ program. This structure is beginning to work well. Teachers report that they focus more acutely on student needs and strategies for meeting those needs. The plan is to continue to strengthen this model.

#### **Increasing learning time and creating community-oriented schools**

- g. Describe how the school will increase learning time.
- *Indicate how learning time will be increased such as using a longer school day, week, or year schedule.*  
Shannon County Alternative School will increase the school day by one-half hour and move to a combination 4-day/year-round program.
  - *Describe the current learning time and the amount of time to be added to significantly increase the total number of school hours (a minimum of 300 additional hours per school year is supported by research).*

Description	Current	Proposed
Student Day	6 instructional hours	6.5 instructional hours (not including after school enrichment/tutoring/extracurricular activities)

Staff Day	7.5 hours	8 hours
Start Day Staff	August 15	July 13
Start Day Students	August 18	Year 1, August 18; Ensuing Years, 2 <sup>nd</sup> week in July
Contract Days Staff	182	210
Instructional Days Students	170	Year 1, 172; Ensuing Years, 181
Instructional Hours	962.5	Year 1, 1118; Ensuing Years, 1176.5 (*+84.5)
PD Fridays—for students	0 hours	13 days at 6.5 hours for enrichment and/or catch-up activities—up to 84.5 hours
PD Fridays—for staff	0	Up to 84.5 hours. Rotation between staff as far as professional development or student enrichment activities

- *Indicate what the additional time will be used for (a) instruction in core academic subjects (b) instruction in other subjects and enrichment activities that contribute to a well-rounded education,, and/or (c) teachers to collaborate, plan, and engage in professional development within and across grades and subjects.*

a) Instruction in Core Academic Subjects	Year 1, 150 additional hours; ensuing years, 200+ additional hours
b) Instruction in other subjects and enrichment activities that contribute to a well-rounded education	Up to 84.5 hours (PD Fridays), plus after school enrichment/tutoring/extracurricular activities
c) Teachers collaborate, plan, and engage in professional development & across grades & subjects	Year 1, 152 additional hours; ensuing years, 80 additional hours; plus up to 84.5 hours (PD Fridays)

- *If extended learning time also includes a before- or after-school instructional program, indicate how the program will be available to all students in the school and provided at a time when most students would be able to participate.*

Time for these activities is above and beyond the extended learning time in the calendar.

- h. How will the school provide appropriate social-emotional and community-oriented services and supports for students?

- *Describe how the needs of students in this school were analyzed to determine which social-emotional and community-oriented services will be appropriate and useful under the circumstances.*

The school's Building Leadership Team meets at least twice monthly to discuss individual student needs. Staff review student discipline referrals and behavioral statistics that have been entered into Infinite Campus; individual educational plans, social services and court records, anecdotal records from teachers, counselors, and parents, etc.

- *Indicate services offered to students such as: include health, nutrition, or social services that may be provided in partnership with local service providers.*

Each month IHS (Indian Heath Service) sends a mobile clinic to each school on the reservation. Shannon County Alternative School has a working relationship with many entities that provide services to students: Behavior Management Hot Springs SD, IHS Social Services Pine Ridge SD, Southern Hills Alcohol/Drug Referral Martin Recovery Addiction

Center Martin SD, Emergency Youth Shelter Pine Ridge SD, Juvenile Detention Center Pine Ridge SD, Tiospaye Treatment Center Pine Ridge SD, Oglala Sioux Tribe Courts, LOWO Program (Social Services for the tribe).

- *Indicate other services that may be offered such as a family literacy program for parents who need to improve their literacy skills in order to support their children's learning.*

Shannon County Alternative School will provide parental training to meet the needs of students academically, emotionally and socially. By going to a year-long school year with selected Fridays designated as professional development days, it will be easier to bring parents into the school for training. This training will include tutoring strategies for parents so they have the skills to assist the students with homework at home. Because of the lack of computers or Internet in the homes, Shannon County Alternative will also open school doors one night each week so that families can have access to technology in our school. The school will conduct a book exchange program to ensure that families have reading materials in the homes.

#### Providing operational flexibility and sustained support

- i. Describe the operational flexibility that will be given to this school.

- *What changes in decision-making policies and mechanisms (including greater school-level flexibility in budgeting, staffing, and scheduling) will be provided to the school?*

The Building Leadership Team will assume greater responsibility for budgeting, staffing and scheduling. Currently, all school budgeting is centralized. Beginning with the 2011-2012 school year, all Title I budgeting will be school-based. School Improvement planning and school-based budgeting will be the responsibility of the School Improvement Team. This team will be made up of members of the Parent Advisory Council (PAC) and members of Building Leadership Team (BLT), including the principal. This group will determine school needs and will budget appropriately to address those needs.

- *What changes in operational practices will be made?*

The Building Leadership Team will assume more responsibility for interviewing and hiring staff. Currently, staff are hired centrally through the Human Resources Office. Beginning with the 2011-2012 school year, the Building Leadership Team will participate in the interviewing process and will make a recommendation to the superintendent when additions to the staff are necessary. This process will ensure that the knowledge, skills and dispositions of new staff match the vision/direction of the district and its schools. It will ensure that new staff will be compatible members of school teams.

- *How will these changes lead to substantial improvement in student achievement outcomes and increase high school graduation rates?*

It is well-documented in the professional literature that, when teachers and parents are involved in making decisions relative to school effectiveness, student achievement improves. In high-needs communities especially, the school cannot do all that needs to be done to serve students. Strong parent education and involvement programs are essential so that students have the home and community supports they need to succeed in school. A strengthening of parent and teacher involvement in decision making will lead to more trust and buy-in between school and community.



- j. Describe the ongoing, intensive technical assistance and related support that will be provided to the school.

- *Who will provide the assistance (the LEA, the SEA, or a designated external lead partner organization)?*

By virtue of its Corrective Action status, Shannon County School District employs a technical adviser and a consultant to assist with budgeting issues and planning/organizational issues. It is anticipated that these contracts will be in place for two additional school years. These two individuals will be available to provide support for implementation of this project. In addition, the district's Leadership Team will be charged with overseeing grant implementation and will, in essence, serve as the project's internal evaluator. This group will receive monthly status reports of grant implementation activities; will continuously review student, program, teacher and community data to determine growth and needs; and will recommend mid-course improvements in project direction.

Finally, both Technology and Innovation in Education (TIE) and the Center for the Advancement of Mathematics and Science Education (CAMSE) at Black Hills State University will partner with Shannon County School District to assure that all requirements of this project are completely successfully.

- *What kind of support will be provided and how often?*

Both technical assistance and professional development support will be provided to the project at least two days per week.

- k. Describe any other optional strategies for providing operational flexibility and intensive support.

The Consortium on Reading Excellence (CORE) will provide support as the district and school continues implementation of their comprehensive Response to Intervention (RtI) plan. CORE's extensive involvement as a Transformation Model provider will enhance the district's efforts to support the Alternative School while building system-wide capacity for sustained improvement.

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- (5) (Tier I & II) The LEA must include a timeline delineating the steps it will take to pre-implement and implement the selected intervention in each Tier I and Tier II school identified in the LEA's application.

- Describe the timeline that addresses the steps the district will take for this school, if it is a Tier I or II school. *Indicate major events and benchmarks for this school over the three year implementation time period, unless a shorter time period is needed and reflected in the budget as well.*

Year One Activities	Year Two Activities	Year Three Activities
Spring, 2011—Hire new principal Spring 2011—Hire full time	School Year 2— Implementation of professional development program and new	Program as described in the grant proposal is fully implemented

<p>instructional coach</p> <p>Spring, 2011—Contract with external services providers TIE and CAMSE</p> <p>Summer, 2011—Planning for use of new curriculum materials and alternate calendar with staff</p> <p>Fall, 2011—Implementation of professional development program and curriculum modules</p> <p>Fall, 2011--new year-round school calendar begins</p> <p>School Year 1—Staff plan parent training/involvement component</p> <p>School Year 1—External providers work with District Leadership Team to revamp evaluation system</p> <p>May of Year 1—District Leadership Team benchmarks progress toward project implementation and makes recommendations to inform future work.</p>	<p>curriculum continue</p> <p>School Year 2—new evaluation/incentives system is implemented</p> <p>School Year 2—new parent involvement/training component is implemented</p> <p>May of Year 2—District Leadership Team benchmarks progress toward project implementation and makes recommendations to inform future work.</p> <p>Summer Year 2—School is extended through the summer</p>	<p>Year 3-Sustainability plan is created</p> <p>May of Year 3—District Leadership Team benchmarks progress toward project implementation and makes recommendations to inform future work.</p> <p>Summer Year 3—School is extended through the summer. Transition to year-round school is complete.</p>
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- (6) (Tier I, II, & III) The LEA must describe the annual goals for student achievement on the State's assessments in both reading/language arts and mathematics that it has established in order to monitor its Tier I, Tier II and Tier III schools that receive school improvement funds. The LEA should also describe the other measurable goals that are set to show student progress.

➤ List the reading and math annual goals for this Tier I, II or III school, if applicable. *The districts must use the Dakota Step (indicator) to define their measurable goals which are based upon the percent of proficient students A goal that indicates safe harbor requirements may be appropriate (decreasing the non-proficient by 10% from the prior year). Other goals should be set that are measurable and specify the indicator (district assessments) that will be used during each of the grant years.*

The number of Shannon County Alternative School students scoring proficient or advanced on the DSTAP in reading will increase from 16 % in 2010 to 24 % in 2011.

The number of Shannon County Alternative School students scoring proficient or advanced on the DSTAP in mathematics will increase from 0% in 2010 to 10% in 2011.

NOTE: Targets are adjusted annually to meet safe harbor requirements for AYP. Targets are calculated by TIE staff and provided annually to the school.

The number of Shannon County Alternative School students demonstrating at least one year's growth on the Dakota STEP (SDI+ Calculation) for Reading and Math, SuccessMaker (1.0+ Grade Equivalent) for Reading and Math, and CBM Word Reading and CBM Math (1.0+ Grade Equivalent) will be more than 50% of the students who tested in both the Spring of the current and prior year for Dakota STEP and who tested in the fall and spring of each year for the district measures.

Additional measureable goals for all students include: More than 50% of the students tested for both the fall pre-test and the spring post-test will show at least one year's growth as measured by Curriculum Based Measurements in reading and math and SuccessMaker reading and math. For DIBELS, the percent of students scoring at benchmark will increase from 33% in spring of 2011 to 43% in spring of 2012 and the percent at intensive will decrease from 47% in spring of 2011 to 37% in spring of 2012.

Another goal is the social/emotional goal of having our students ready to learn. Helping students feel safe—ways in which we accomplish these goals are through student/parent counseling, cultural activities and peer mentoring. Students are going to make gains when they come to school ready to learn and in a safe environment. One measure for this goal is meeting the academic goals identified above. Staff will select and set targets for a social/emotional measure to be administered in the fall and spring.

- ~~(7) (Tier III) For each Tier III school the LEA commits to serve, the LEA must identify the services the school will receive or the activities the school will implement. *Describe in detail how the SIG funds will be used to improve academic achievement in this school, if it is a Tier III school. Indicate how these activities are designed to meet the specific needs of this school, its teachers, and its students.*~~
- (8) (Tier I & II) As appropriate, the LEA must consult with relevant stakeholders regarding the LEA's application and implementation of school improvement models in its Tier I and Tier II schools. Identify the stakeholders for this school and describe the consultation that took place. *Describe consultation with school administration, teachers and other staff, and parents and community members. Indicate when and how the consultation took place within the timeframe while developing the LEA and school application for SIG funds.*

### **Shannon County Alternative School**

Note: Planning for this application occurred during the 2009-2010 school year. The Shannon County Alternative School Improvement Team of Brownie Eagle Bull, Building Manager; Chris Benson, Parent/Community; Robert Lockhart, Title I Teacher; Lowell Phillips, Special Education Teacher; Terry Porter, Classroom Teacher; Velma Kills Back, Classroom Teacher; and Wilbert Buckman, Classroom Teacher met from 8:00-9:00 each Wednesday in March to review the application and implementation of the Transformation School Improvement Model.

For the current application, Superintendent Zephier visited with the current alternative school principal/district director of school improvement, Vickie Grant and building manager, Darrell (Brownie) Eagle Bull regarding the prospective 1003g grant opportunity on March 18, 2011. The district director of school improvement/alternative school principal, Vickie Grant and building manager, Brownie Eagle Bull discussed options later that same day as well as via phone and in person as the grant writing process evolved. Mr. Eagle Bull and Ms. Grant

participated in the 1003(g) Application Webinar on March 24, 2011 and the Senior Leadership Team consisting of Richard Zephier, superintendent/community member; Coy Sasse, business manager/community member; Maurice Twiss, federal programs director/community member; Vickie Grant, school improvement director, Robert Two Crow, Lakota studies director/community member; Beverly Bertram, SCEA President, Dana Christensen, technology director; Dennis Brewer, transportation director/community member; Terry Albers, human resources director/community member and principals, Monica Whirlwind Horse, Robert Hall, Larry Larson, Steve Selchert, Melvin Sierra, Barbara Ice, and Connie Kaltenbach discussed and endorsed moving forward with the Alternative School application on 3/28/2011. Addendum #1 is a letter from Darrell Eagle Bull and list of staff, students and parents describing the school's continuous efforts to assess needs and plan towards becoming a Transformation School.

Addendum 1: April 28, 2011 from Darrell Eagle Bull, Director of Student Services/Building Manager

**As a school community we were very disappointed when we learned we were denied the SIG grant last May. We worked very hard with parents, students and staff in the planning of a transformation school. We held meetings with parents last April and May to discuss what our school would look like. It was very encouraging to see how excited everyone was to prove our Alternative school could show major growth. We felt like we are given a bad rap when it was posted in newspapers statewide that we're one of the poorest performing schools in the state of South Dakota. Our school population is made up of at risk, low achieving, social economically challenged and many students from many communities on the reservation.**

**After we received notice we were denied we still made some changes and will continue to do so. We started a (PAC) Parent Advisory Council in our building. We have close to 75% of parents coming each month. We hold meetings each month to discuss how to work together to have the best school on the reservation; topics may include student progress, discipline, attendance, curriculum, incentives and parental training.**

**The staff meets each Monday to discuss the start of the week and on Fridays to discuss closing out the week our main focus is to develop strategies, which will benefit our students. These conferences center on each student's academics and social skills which we are starting to see major changes in our school building.**

**We became very excited when we received word in March that we had the opportunity to reapply for the same grant again. I held a meeting with staff and students and ask if they wanted to try again. This time letting them know there might be a chance we wouldn't receive the grant again. As a staff we talked to our parents letting them know we're reapplying again. After speaking with everyone we chose to do it. I really hate to let down my students, parents and community by being denied once again. As a learning community we are making many improvements to ours school, we are making academic and social growth each year. But to have a Transformation Model school and making it work on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation is a chance in a lifetime.**



Darrell Eagle Bull – Director of Student Services

Staff	Students	Parents
Darrell Eagle Bull, Admin	Hoksila Arapahoe	JoAnn Sierra
Vickie Grant, Principal	Talon Bettelyoun	Lynx & Tina Bettelyoun
Velma Kills Back, Teacher	Kenneth Black Elk	Arlette Janis
Robert Lockhart, Teacher	Wolakota Win Blacksmith	Arlette Blacksmith
Terry Porter, Teachers	Cyrus Brave	Albert Brave

Robert Fire Thunder, Para	Katherine Brewer	Violet Alford & Lorenzo Brave Heart
Francis Big Crow, Para	Aria Camp	Victorio & Rayette Camp
Helen Buckman, Para	John Charging Crow III	John Charging Crow Jr.
Tim Carrick, Para	William Dillon	Naomi Dillon
Richard Little Bear, Para	Terrance Fisherman & Franklin Goings	Joyce Fisherman
Loren Waters, Para	Rachel Garnier	Geraldine Helper
Tom Vocu, Para	Chloe Hendrickson-Porter	Terry Porter
Monte Briggs, Para	Trina Lakota	Leon & Mayonne Lakota
Luwana Janis, Social Worker	Michael Little Bear	Belnita Little Bear
	Princess Little Moon	Geraldine Fast Horse
	Unique Little Moon	Cynthia Little Moon
	Maximus Martinez	Annabelle Martinez
	Keenan & Mahpiya Menard	Fred Menard
	Michael Montoya	Stephanie Palmier
	Payton One Feather	Jeanuelle Twiss
	Tianee Patton	Heather Red Hawk
	Samantha Pittman	Carla Pittman
	Denny Pourier	Linette Cross Dog
	Jordan Pourier	Lorna Pourier
	Lori Red Owl	Mildred Lone Hill
	Jesse Schmockel	Alice Big Crow
	Edwin Shields	Agnes Little Hawk
	Carly Shott	Melody Martin
	Benjamin Smoke	Lisa Lone Hill
	Shaniya Spider	Sandra & Brenda Spider
	Shania Two Bulls	Linda Two Bulls
	Tyrone Waters	Jenny Waters
	Brandon Watkins	Robert Watkins
	Sinte White Butterfly	Victoria White Butterfly
	Jamie Yankton	Creighton & Dawn Yankton

**BUDGET:** An LEA must include a budget that indicates the amount of school improvement funds the LEA will use each year in each Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III school it commits to serve. Complete the budget for this particular school.

**Budget categories for consideration in required budget narrative.**

**Include a budget description for each year of the proposed 3 year project. Provide details linking expenditures to requirements of the intervention selected for Tiers I and II. Indicate expenses related to strategies to be used in Tier III schools.**

**Grant Periods:**

Project Year 1: July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012  
 Project Year 2: July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013  
 Project Year 3: July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014

**Personnel:** This is the cost for an instructional coach and additional cost for staff days (10 Professional Development days for certified staff and 18 extended year days for instructional staff). \$102,084

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Instructional Coach:	48,000.00	48,000.00	48,000.00
5 teachers, 10 PD Days:	12,000.00	12,000.00	12,000.00
Extended Contracts: 18 days, 5 teachers, 10 paraprofessionals	47,700.00	47,700.00	47,700.00

**Employee Benefits:**

Benefits (25% of salaries):	25,521.00	25,521.00	25,521.00
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**Equipment:** Workstations and consumables for the Synergistics Modules (Desks, chairs, computers and server.)

Computers and Furniture For Modular Laboratories	29,720.00
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**Supplies:** Synergistics Modules from Pitsco Education. The labs focus on a variety of core curriculum topics, including science, technology, engineering, and math. Engaging students through a multimedia curriculum and hands-on activities, Modules are a proven method for effectively delivering core content knowledge at the middle-level and the lower grades. They coincide with our state standards. Curriculum cost of up to \$63,150.00 based on proposed modules, although no more than above amount.

Modules, module supplies, Information system	63150.00
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**Contractual:** Professional Development Consultant Costs

Services rendered by external PD providers	5,320.00	5,320.00	5,320.00
Indirect Costs: .0252%	5,690.00	3,350.00	3,350.00
Corrected Indirect Costs: .0336%	6,588	4,466	4,466



**Budget Information**  
**American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA)**  
**Title I School Improvement 1003(g)**

**Name of School: Shannon County Alternative School**

**Budget Summary**

Budget Categories	Project Year 1 7/01/11-6/30/12 (a)		** Project Year 2 7/01/12-6/30/13 (b)	** Project Year 3 7/1/13-6/30-14 (c)	Project Total (f)
	Pre- implementation	Year I - Full Implementation			
<b>1. Personnel</b>		\$102,084	\$102,084	\$102,084	\$306,252
<b>2. Employee Benefits</b>		\$25,521	\$25,521	\$25,521	\$75,563
<b>3. Travel</b>					
<b>4. Equipment</b>		\$29,720			\$29,720
<b>5. Supplies</b>		\$63,150			\$63,150
<b>6. Contractual</b>		\$5,320	\$5,320	\$5,320	\$15,906
<b>7. Professional Development</b>					
<b>8. Total Direct Costs (line 1-7)</b>		\$225,795	\$132,925	\$132,925	\$491,645
<b>9. Indirect Costs*</b>		\$5,690	\$3,350	\$3,350	\$12,390
		\$6,588	\$4,466	\$4,466	\$15,521
<b>10. Total Costs (lines 8-9)</b>		\$232,383	\$136,391	\$136,391	\$507,166

\*Use restricted indirect cost rate (same rate as regular Title I program) **Corrected Indirect Cost Rate of 3.36%**

\*\* Contingent upon continued federal funding